

## **PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD**

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2006**

**3:00 P.M., J. MARTIN GRIESEL ROOM, CENTENNIAL PLAZA II**

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:08 P.M., in the J. Martin Griesel Room, Centennial Plaza II, with members Senhauser, Chatterjee, Raser, Spraul-Schmidt, Bloomfield present; Sullebarger, Kreider and Wallace absent.

### **MINUTES**

The Historic Conservation Board unanimously approved the minutes of September 25, 2006 meeting (motion by Spraul-Schmidt, second by Chatterjee).

### **CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 123 WEST 9<sup>TH</sup> STREET, NINTH STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented a report on the proposed rehabilitation of 123 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, including the construction of a rear deck and modifications to accommodate a new garage door opening. The property is a contributing building in the Ninth Street Historic District.

The building contains two sections, a four-story brick building fronting W. 9<sup>th</sup> Street and a smaller two-story building on Weaver Alley; a one-story brick hyphen connects the two. The owner, Andy Stetson, wishes to rehabilitate the upper three floors of the main building as a single-family residence; the first floor will remain commercial.

Ms. Cowden stated that most of the proposed work would be on the rear building. A new two-car overhead garage door would replace an existing window and two doors. A new wood deck with a decorative metal railing would be installed on top of the two-story building. A metal bridge would provide access from the third floor of the residence; existing windows on the rear elevation of the front building would be converted to doors. Mr. Stetson had agreed to install a simpler metal rail than the curvilinear one proposed.

The deck will provide outdoor space for Mr. Stetson's residence and will function as part of a fire exit system required for the first floor commercial space. Egress would be through the main building and over the deck to a metal fire escape to be installed on the Weaver Alley elevation of the secondary building. Ms. Cowden said that the Board has previously approved similar modifications individually, but that staff was concerned about the cumulative effect of the garage opening, the new deck and fire escape.

The project architect Steve Hampton acknowledged that the fire escape was an unusual solution, but was the only way to provide the required second means of egress from commercial space once the first floor was converted to a garage with an electric overhead door. Mr. Stetson said that the project would not be feasible without parking for two cars in an area where parking is at a premium.

Mr. Raser stated he supported approving the deck but felt the garage door cut and fire escape system needed further investigation to see if other, better options were available.

### **BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Chatterjee, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to take the following action:

1. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed new deck finding that the work meets the Ninth Street Historic District conservation guidelines with the following conditions:
  - a. A simple metal baluster shall be selected instead of the proposed curvilinear balusters.

- b. The south elevation window shall be infilled with brick salvaged from the parapet walls and installed with a 1" reveal.
  - c. Final drawings for the deck shall be submitted to the Urban Conservator for review and approval prior to construction.
2. Delay consideration of the garage door cut and fire escape system to permit the applicant to investigate other options for the garage and egress from the first floor commercial space or to present further justification for the proposed changes and to return to the Historic Conservation Board at a later date.

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS & ZONING VARIANCES, 1604-1606 MANSFIELD STREET, PROSPECT HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Staff member Caroline Kellam presented a report on the proposed construction of a seven-space parking lot on a vacant lot at 1604-1606 Mansfield Street. She stated the parking lot would serve buildings at 1601 and 1603 Broadway and 324 Liberty Hill presently being rehabilitated by Eber Associates as market rate condominiums. The parking lot would only serve the residents of the condominium and would be maintained by the association.

The applicant proposes to construct an asphalt parking lot with seven-angled spaces. There will be landscaping in the northwest corner of the lot along Mansfield and along Bunker Alley, a 4' high wrought iron fence and lighting. The fence meets the Prospect Hill historic guidelines, but requires a variance for the opacity. Ms. Kellam stated that the small lot is also too small to meet the full parking requirement for the condominium under the zoning code. Its limited size necessitates variances to the code's landscaping standards and requires that parking spaces on the street and alley be in front yards. She said that staff felt it would be in the interest of historic conservation to grant the variances to be able to develop this lot as surface parking for the condominium development in order to make the project more marketable and assure the rehabilitation of the buildings.

**BOARD ACTION**

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Raser, second by Chatterjee) to take the following actions:

1. Grant a conditional use for a parking lot to provide off-street parking for the condominium development located across the alley from this site with the condition that the required covenant is filed.
2. Grant zoning variances:
  - a) To allow the applicant to use the entire lot for parking,
  - b) To allow the applicant to provide 7 parking spaces instead of the required 14 spaces,
  - c) To allow the applicant to install a 4' wrought iron fence in lieu of the required opaque screening,
  - d) To allow the applicant to provide two triangular landscaping areas in lieu of the continuous 3 feet landscaping area,

Finding that the variances are necessary and appropriate in the interest of historic conservation so as not to adversely affect the historic architectural or aesthetic integrity of the district.

3. Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of the parking lot per the proposed plans dated 9/15/06.
4. Final plans and any revisions to be reviewed and approved by the Urban Conservator prior to issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness and a building permit.

## **PRELIMINARY DESIGN & CONCEPT PLAN REVIEW, FACTORY SQUARE, HAMILTON AND BLUE ROCK AVENUES, NORTHSIDE NBD HISTORIC DISTRICT**

*Mr. Bloomfield recused himself.*

Staff member Adrienne Cowden presented a report on the proposed concept plan for Factory Square, a mixed-use development in Northside, in anticipation of Bloomfield/Schon+Partners filing a zone change request from Manufacturing General (MG) to a Planned Development (PD) District for the project.

Factory Square encompasses eight and one-half acres. The irregular site is generally bounded by Knowlton Street on the north, Blue Rock Street on the south, Fergus Street on the east and Hamilton Avenue and Moline Court on the west. The property is currently zoned Manufacturing General (MG); the westernmost 100'+/- is located in the Northside NBD Historic District. The site encompasses the former Myron G. Johnson & Son Lumber Company property and includes the c. 1920 American Can Factory, a late 19th century railroad depot and a former bowling alley.

In 2005 Bloomfield/Schon+Partners purchased the American Can Factory building at 4101 Spring Grove Avenue and later the adjacent block to the east accommodate the parking requirements for its residential/commercial conversion. The partnership is currently negotiating with the City Department of Community Development & Planning (DCDP) on the development of the Johnson Lumber Company site and bowling alley.

The concept plan for Factory Square involves new construction and adaptive reuse including the rehabilitation of the c. 1920 American Can Factory and a late 19<sup>th</sup> century railroad office building, a new mixed-use residential/commercial building and new residential townhouses. The project also includes a landscaped park at the intersection of Hamilton Avenue and Blue Rock Road and surface parking. Financing sources include Clean Ohio Funds, New Market Tax Credits, Historic Tax Credits, Tax Increment Financing and private equity as well as loans from banks and the City of Cincinnati.

The Board will play two roles regarding the project. First, it would review the design of the park, surface parking and new three-story mixed-use building within the Northside NBD Historic District for their compliance with the conservation guidelines. Second, it would advise the City Planning Commission on a PD District created for the project. PD zoning would permit residential and commercial uses prohibited in the present MG district. Under the zoning code the Board advises the City Planning Commission on the PD District's Final Development Plan when all or a portion of the project site is located within a designated historic district. Tom Jackson, DCDP, indicated any development agreement would also likely require review by the Board.

Steven Bloomfield, of Bloomfield/Schon+Partners, gave a brief overview of the project and stated that the project has the support of the Northside Community Council and its Business Association. He added that the architecture of the new construction would be very contemporary, but will respect and respond to the height and massing of the nearby buildings. He provided a large model, maps and drawings of the project.

Jose Garcia, project architect, stated that the new construction design would be very simple in order to compliment and frame the existing architecture. He described of possible materials for the new buildings and the design of the green space along Blue Rock Street from Hamilton Avenue to the American Can building. He emphasized that that the greenspace is an integral part of the design and that expanding the turning lane on Blue Rock would destroy this feature.

Mr. Senhauser stated he was receptive to the idea that the American Can Building be a foreground building even though it was originally a manufacturing facility. He added that there were some items, such as the traffic system and the proposed curb cuts that needed to be addressed with the Department of Transportation & Engineering. He was particularly concerned that the entry near the

intersection of Hamilton and Blue Rock would be problematic. Mr. Garcia responded that if the entry was not permitted, the parking lot would be reconfigured to include a cul-de-sac at that point, but emphasized that parking adjacent to the retail space was essential.

Mr. Chatterjee stated he felt a curb cut that close to an intersection was questionable in regards to urban design. He said he was very pleased that the applicant was working on this project and the project would be a benefit to the neighborhood. He did suggest that the former train line through the site should be preserved as open space and in the orientation of the new buildings

Mr. Raser stated the design should be simple and elegant but not simplistic. He noted as well that Hamilton Avenue is a primary façade and the elevation should not be treated as just the side of a building. He suggested moving the mixed-use building to the corner of Hamilton Avenue and Blue Rock Street to create a more urban design. Mr. Bloomfield responded that the corner location had been considered but the proposed location was preferred.

In response to Mr. Senhauser's concern for the extensive parking, Mr. Bloomfield said that the American Can Building alone will require 200 spaces for the condominium units. Half would be within the first floor of the building, half in the adjacent lots. The parking lot must also accommodate an events center within the American Can building as well as the proposed commercial, office and retail uses. Mr. Senhauser also commented on the absence of buildings on Mad Anthony Street. In response, Mr. Bloomfield stated they are hoping to acquire additional property on that street and build housing in the future.

### **BOARD ACTION**

Because this was a preliminary design and concept plan review, no action was required by the Board.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Senhauser summarized the deliberations of the Board sub-committee formed to review the proposed new School of Creative and Performing Arts. He stated the committee had met with CPS and its architects on several occasions and arrived at a scheme it could support. Although the design of the building has not been substantially changed, several modifications have been made that better define the urban edge of the site facing Washington Park. These included moving the parking lot entrance to Race Street and enhancing the landscaping and fencing along 12<sup>th</sup> Street. He added that in anticipation of the acquisition and demolition of the buildings at 12<sup>th</sup> and Elm, an outdoor performance area has been added to the north elevation. He said the sub-committee would recommend approval of the modified SCPA design at the next meeting.

In response to Mr. Raser, Mr. Forwood stated that staff would re-notify neighborhood residents and organizations of the meeting.

### **ADJOURN**

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

---

William L. Forwood  
Urban Conservator

---

John C. Senhauser  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_